placed an order for procurement of various drills, spares and tools worth lakhs of rupees which were not required by the company; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) The Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) placed orders for purchase of 29 drill machines and certain tools and accessories amounting to Rs. 3.36 crores during January-February, 1990. The allegation that orders were placed for drills, spares and tools not required by MECL has been referred to CBI for enquiry. The CBI on the basis of preliminary enquiry have filed an FIR against seven officials of MECL.

BAUXITE SUPPLY IN THE COUNTRY

3428. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bauxite supply position has become critical due to depletion of the bauxite reserves in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial steps Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

CONVERSION OF HCL DUES INTO EQUITY

3429. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) has proposed its total loan plus interest outstanding to the Government be converted into equity; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and Government's decision thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) Hindustan Copper Limited has proposed for conversion of its outstanding loan and interest thereon of Rs. 166.56 crores and Rs. 83 crores respectively as on 31-3-93 into equity. It has been decided to keep the proposal of the Company in abeyance.

AVAILABILITY OF GOLD IN BIHAR

3430. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA : SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR BIRLA :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Bihar has sent a preliminary report to the Ministry of Mines on the availability of gold in Bihar areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the States have also sent reports with regard to availability of gold in their States; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard and steps taken by Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir. The detailed report on the investigations for gold in Sono Block, Karmatia area, Jamui District, Bihar has been sent by Bihar Government.

(b) The report submitted by Directorate of Geology and Mining (DGM), Bihar has indicated a total resource of 223 million tonnes of gold ore with an average gold as say of 0.17 g/t which is very low. As such, the Karmatia prospect does not appear to be of economic significance.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.